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*THE HARVARD EXPEDITION TO SAMARIA  
EXCAVATIONS OF 1909<sup>1</sup>*

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I. IDENTIFICATION OF THE ISRAELITE PALACE

The excavations of the Harvard Palestinian Expedition at Samaria in 1909 have revealed for the first time the plan and the masonry of a royal Israelite palace. The view thus given of the material resources and technical skill at the command of the kings of Israel is so enlightening for the history of Palestine that the identification of the palace becomes the point of paramount interest. It must be recorded at once that we have not found a line of Hebrew inscription anywhere in the building, nor have our excavations given us the name of any of the kings of Israel. The identification rests entirely on archaeological grounds; but these, though simple, are direct and clear.

The hill on which stands the modern town of Sebastiya<sup>2</sup> is quite certainly the hill of Samaria bought by Omri from Shemer for two talents of silver. The chief events in the history of the hill, which are linked together by references in historical documents to complete the identification, are as follows:—

*Israelite Period*

1. Purchase of the hill by Omri and construction of a town called Shomerôn (Samaria). This presupposes the construction of a royal palace. Ca. 900 B.C. 1 Kings 16 24.

2. Construction of a temple to Baal and of an "ivory palace" by Ahab. 1 Kings 16 32, 22 39.

<sup>1</sup> Abridged from a fuller preliminary report which, it is expected, will soon be published with plans and illustration. For an account of the work of the Expedition in 1908, see HARVARD THEOLOGICAL REVIEW for January, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> The local pronunciation is *Sebústi*.

3. Continued occupation of the site as the capital of Israel down to 722 B.C. 1 Kings 22 to 2 Kings 18.

4. Capture of Samaria by Sargon and transportation of 27,290 of the people of Israel to Assyria. The rest of the people left in Samaria under an Assyrian governor. 722 B.C. 2 Kings 17 6, 18 9. Sargon, *Prunkinschrift*, 23-25; *Annals*.

### *Babylonian Period*

5. Establishment of Babylonian colonists at Samaria by Sargon and Esarhaddon. This presupposes the building of houses and fortifications. Ca. 720-670 B.C. References as in preceding section.

6. Capture of Samaria by assault by Alexander the Great. 331 B.C. For references to Diodorus Siculus etc., see Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, p. 347.

### *Greek Period*

7. Establishment of a Syro-Macedonian colony and reconstruction of the fortifications.<sup>3</sup> 331 B.C.

8. Destruction of Samaria by John Hyrcanus. 109 B.C. Josephus, *Antiq.* xiii. 10 2, 3; *Wars* i. 2 7.

9. For the rest of the Seleucid-Maccabaeen period the town remained a ruin and apparently nearly uninhabited. 109-60 B.C. Joseph. *Antiq.* xiv. 5 3.

### *Roman Period*

10. Restored to its inhabitants by Pompey; rebuilt and resettled by Gabinius. 60 B.C. Joseph. *Antiq.* xiv. 4 4, 5 3; *Wars* i. 7 7, 8 4.

11. Rebuilt by Herod and named Sebaste. 30-1 B.C. Josephus, *Antiq.* xv. 8 5; *Wars* ii. 21 2.

Thus the site has probably never been entirely deserted, and it has lain in ruins for only two short periods, the first just after the Assyrian deportation and the second during the forty-nine

<sup>3</sup> The walls appear to have been broken thrice and rebuilt between 332 and 306 B.C.

years subsequent to the destruction of the city by John Hyrcanus. The name Samaria clung to the place until Herod changed it to Sebaste, and the name Sebaste is still that of the native village on the eastern flank of the hill. Furthermore, the known data as to the occupation of the hill of Samaria give us six periods of construction, from the purchase by Omri to the works of Herod, for the principal buildings on the hill.

Of these periods the last, the magnificent city built by Herod "for his own security and as a monument of his magnificence,"<sup>4</sup> is easily identifiable. The forum, at the modern threshing floor, with its basilica and other buildings not yet excavated; the road of columns leading around the hill to the forum; the ornamental gate, oriented, unlike the underlying older gates, to lead straight into the road of columns; the great outer wall "twenty stadii in circumference"; and the hippodrome in the hollow on the north of the forum,—all are coherent parts of the same unified plan, and show the same masonry and architectural forms. The inscriptions found, the coins, the pottery, and the architectural forms show conclusively that this group of structures belongs to the period of the early Roman Empire and must therefore be the city of Sebaste built by Herod; that the buildings were repaired and altered about the time of Septimius Severus; and that they ceased to be used soon after the death of Constantine the Great. To this group of buildings must be added the great temple which stands on the top of the hill and agrees exactly with Josephus's description of the Herodian temple to Augustus:—

Now within and about the middle of it [Sebaste] he built a sacred place, of a furlong and a half [in circuit] and adorned it with all sorts of decorations, and therein erected a temple, which was illustrious on account of both its largeness and its beauty.<sup>5</sup> . . . In the midst of this city, thus built, [he] had erected a very large temple to Caesar Augustus.<sup>6</sup>

Here the great marble statue of a Roman emperor, the dedicatory stelae, the coins, and the details of construction tell the same story of Herodian origin and later Roman restoration.

Thus the Herodian structures, clearly identified, form the point

<sup>4</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.* xv. 8 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Antiq.* xv. 8 5.

<sup>6</sup> *Wars* i. 21 2.

of departure for dating all the underlying older structures. These underlying older structures are themselves so built one over the other that their relative order is beyond dispute, as follows:—

1. The latest pre-herodian buildings appear to be the miserable cave-dwellings on the southern edge of the lower terrace at the summit (dated by coins) and the outer, square, retaining wall at the gateway (dated by position relative to Herod's gate).

2. The uppermost pre-herodian buildings under the temple form a complex of houses dated to about 125 B.C. by coins found above and below the floors. These are, no doubt, houses of that Samaria which John Hyrcanus destroyed in 109 B.C.

3. Underneath the houses just mentioned are remnants of at least two older complexes of houses which are thus clearly previous to 125 B.C. in date. Beyond the temple area on both sides and on the lower terrace, the same two or three older complexes are clearly distinguishable. Here fragments of red-figured ware and other Greek pottery carry the date back to about 400 B.C. At the gateway, under the towers of the Gabinius-Herod gate, lies a gateway of known Greek form—two square towers with a circular building behind, probably the gate built by the colony of Alexander the Great.

4. At the summit, underneath the Greek walls, there are traces of mud-brick structures and of a very thick fort-wall of stones, the same fort-wall being found also at the gateway. This wall, in spite of the great number of large stones available in the ruins of older buildings, is built of small stones in a manner characteristic of ancient, in fact of Babylonian, brick-work. In the filling of the construction-trench in which it is built were Israelite potsherds and a fragment of a cuneiform tablet.

5. Below the Herodian walls at the summit, even where they are carried to the greatest depth, below all Greek walls, below the Babylonian walls wherever found, there is a series of massive walls beautifully built of large limestone blocks founded on rock and forming part of one great building.

Thus we come to the other end of the chronological series of buildings on the summit—a single great building founded on the rock. This building, consisting of great open courts surrounded by small rooms, comparable in plan and even in size with the

Babylonian palaces, is certainly royal in size and architecture. The rocky slopes of the hill are scarred with quarry-cuts in some of which the blocks of stone remain undetached from the rock below. These blocks are identical in size and in stone with the blocks used in the palace. The rock has everywhere been dressed to receive the palace walls, and there is no trace of any sort of earlier buildings. The site is the very summit of the hill—the foremost building site—the only conceivable site for a palace-fortress such as Omri and Ahab must have built. A royal building, the first built on the primary building site of the hill of Samaria, can only be the palace of the Israelite kings.

This palace shows three distinct periods of construction. The latest, poor in every way, is represented by insignificant alterations which cannot at present be further identified. The second period is represented by a very great increase in the size of the palace down the western and southern slopes of the hill where we have found the outside walls. The masonry of this period shows finer joints, smoother surfaces, and better building than that of the first period. This extension is built against and joined with the earlier palace, and in places covers its quarries. The earliest part of the palace occupies a knoll of rock at the very summit, whose western side has been cut away to a vertical face about two metres high, and, extending eastward under the part of the hill still unexcavated, is as yet of unknown extent. The masonry is more massive and less finished than that of the second period. I think there can be no doubt that this central core of the palace was built by Omri; and provisionally, until further proof is available, I have ascribed the great addition on the west and south to Ahab. There is no mention in the Book of Kings of any other ruler of Israel who built great buildings at Samaria.

On the surface of the rock, in some cases under the walls of the Omri palace, there are oil cups, circular receptacles, and shallow troughs such as are found all over Palestine. These are pre-Israelite and show that the hill-top was probably a bare rock when Omri bought it.

## II. THE EXCAVATIONS

The arrival of the expedition at Sebaste was delayed by the reactionary revolution in Constantinople which broke out on April 13. On May 1, however, Mr. Fisher and I with thirty-five trained Egyptian workmen left Egypt for Palestine, and we arrived at Sebaste on May 7. After further delays the work began on May 31 and continued steadily until November 4, six days' holidays, a few rainy days in October, and the weekly day of rest being the only interruptions.

Efforts to secure a classical archaeologist or another architect having failed, the entire direction and registration of the work was carried on by Mr. Fisher and myself. The photographic record was made by my staff of Egyptians, one of whom, assisted by a local Christian schoolmaster, relieved me of a great part of the work of time-keeping and accounts, while the efficiency of others made the work of oversight comparatively easy. The commissioner of the Imperial Ottoman Museum, Mahmud Shawket Effendi el-Khalidi, of Jerusalem, was of the greatest service, and exerted himself in every way for the success of the work.

The local force consisted of from 230 to 260 persons, men, boys, women, and girls. A higher rate of wages was paid to these people than is usual in the district, with two objects, to secure the same persons day after day and so train them to the work, and to make it possible to demand more work of them than was customary. The results more than justified this measure.

The workmen were divided into nine gangs varying in size from twenty to thirty-five persons, and each gang was in charge of three Egyptians who worked with pick and hoe alongside their men. Other Egyptians were detailed to look after the lines of carriers and direct the dumping, and a special gang of twelve men was told off to move stones and build retaining walls. Any area marked for excavation was divided into sections about seven by ten metres in size, and each gang was assigned a section, the Egyptians being made responsible for the proper excavation of the section.

The registration of the work was made by means of the following records: (1) A journal, with additional notes written up at intervals. (2) Plans and sections on a scale of 1 : 50, with notes and drawings of details. (3) A photographic record of each stage of the excavations, showing details of masonry, and the objects found. This record contains about 1200 negatives, of three sizes, all numbered and registered in a book with full details. (4) A card catalogue of objects found, with a card for each object, giving number, provenance, date, and full description of material, size, and condition, a photograph, and, when desirable, a drawing as well. For the season this catalogue contains 2027 cards.

At first an attempt was made to remove the *débris* layer by layer, but this was soon found to be impossible, for beneath the cultivation stratum there were no regular horizontal strata. The *débris* of each period had been disturbed during the construction of the next architectural period in the search for stone for building material and in the effort to place the new foundations on rock: hence foundations of all periods rested on the rock and stood mixed together—a wilderness of walls. Moreover, certain areas, in one case over 100 square metres in extent, have been disturbed in Christian-Moslem times in the search for building material, the holes in many cases being cut down to solid rock and most of them being subsequently filled in to restore the ground to cultivation. These filled holes are clearly marked, as the dirt thrown in from one side forms a continuously advancing gravity slope with the stones and pebbles in a series of pockets at the bottom and the finer dirt in thin sloping strata above. In other parts, however, the successive deposition and disturbance of strata proved easily traceable. The undisturbed geological dirt, which remained in places on the rock and in crevices, was the same reddish gravelly soil seen at present on the surrounding hill-tops. Above this a layer of decayed yellow limestone *débris* contained the limestone walls of the Israelite period. The yellow *débris* was cut through by the construction-trenches in which were built the Babylonian and Roman temple walls, and these trenches were filled with black *débris* belonging to the deposits above the yellow. All these deposits above the yellow



limestone débris were dark-colored and indistinguishable in character except that the lowest levels frequently contained patches and pockets of coals, ashes, and burnt material (iron or copper slag). The only means of separating the different periods of the black stratum was to find the floors of the successive structures, but those of the last Seleucid houses (destroyed 109 B.C.) were practically the only floors preserved, and, leaving aside the small objects found, the black débris below them did not differ in constituency from that above. Where a Roman floor was found, as in the temple portico and certain houses on the lower terrace, there was only a cultivation stratum above. This was like all the other black débris—only a little softer and drier.

Once it was clear that regular horizontal strata were not to be expected, the plan was adopted of clearing steadily downwards along the walls until we found an existing floor level or the foot of a superstructure wall; then we cleared along this level. After the first few weeks, the filled holes were completely cleared along with the top stratum from which their filling had come. Finally, with a knowledge of our deposits, which permitted an almost instant recognition of the character and date of the débris, we were able to clear with great consistency—removing cultivation stratum, registering any late field-walls found in this, clearing to the first floor-level, then to the next, and so on, down to the upper surface of the yellow deposit. Lastly the yellow débris was cleared away, and the underlying red earth, where found. On the summit this process was repeated strip by strip over an area of about 6000 square metres.

The excavations begun in 1908 consisted, for the main part, of a series of trenches on the very summit of the hill and at the building which was visible west of the threshing floor. As the main attention was devoted to the summit, the trenches at the "lower temple," as it was temporarily designated, never reached a point which could reveal either the character or the plan of the building. At the summit, the Trench G as originally laid out was intended to cut across the very top of the ancient hill, but we now know that the ancient top lay some metres south of the apparent top. Trench F therefore, instead of cutting across the Israelite palace, laid bare the front part of the large building

identified as Herod's Temple of Augustus. A large marble statue found in front of the temple stairway was recognized as a statue of Augustus. To the west a large vault was found and to the south the trenches revealed certain walls—some of the temple and others not understood. It appears now that the wall of the palace at the summit was laid bare for several Israelite metres, but its importance was scarcely to be recognized at the bottom of a narrow trench.

Coming to the site as it was left at the end of the first season, we decided to continue the attack at these two points, but by clearing large areas, not by trenches. Certain gangs left free at various times were also employed in excavating the gateway known to travellers as the "Lepers' Gate." Thus the work was carried on at three points:—the summit, the basilica or threshing floor, and the gateway.

The summit work was carried out in a number of contiguous sections known as Strip 1, etc. On May 31 work was begun on Strip 1, adjoining the Herodian temple on the east. Here a scrap of mosaic pointed to a floor level, and when this level had been cleared so far as preserved, it was seen to belong to a large bathing establishment with furnace, cold and hot baths, and water-closet. These floors in turn were cleared away. About 60 to 100 cm. below there were several trodden surfaces, made by the tread of feet during the construction of walls, but no floors and only foundation walls. The débris was black and mixed with red and black potsherds and other Seleucid fragments. Just above the rock was a thin layer of yellow limestone débris so hard packed that it was mistaken for decayed surface rock. The bath-house, whose floor was two metres below the temple floor, was temporarily assigned to the Roman period, but it was seen later to belong to the Seleucid town destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 109 B.C., and the lower walls were still earlier.

Embedded in the yellow débris were massive walls, founded on the rock, whose importance immediately sprang into notice. They were clearly part of a large and important building. The rock was dressed to receive them, which shows that they were the first walls built on the site. Beside them, the rock bore only the oil cups and other small rock-cut receptacles so common

all over Palestine. If this hill is the hill of Samaria, these walls can only belong to the Israelite period.

On the southern half of Strip 1 everything was in the greatest confusion. There were remnants of Herodian and later Roman walls as well as Greek and Israelite walls, and across the whole ran a heavy wall 4.30 metres wide, built of small stones and called the "Babylonian wall." These had all suffered from the removal of stone and from agricultural terracing.

On July 2, having finished our detailed examination of Strip 1 and the removal of such walls as stood in the way of clearing up the Israelite building, we began cutting out the top stratum of Strip 2. A floor was already visible on the eastern face, and we followed this across the strip from east to west. There was no floor preserved higher than this one, which was 2.75 metres lower than the pavement of the temple-portico excavated last year. It was soon clear that the temple had been built over a group of houses of earlier date, although the foundation walls of the temple cut through the walls of these houses to bed-rock or to the Israelite walls, which were treated by the Herodian builders as equivalent to bed-rock. These houses are the latest pre-herodian buildings on the spot, and they can only be the houses of the Seleucid city destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 109 B.C., for the restoration by Gabinius in 60 B.C. was certainly a very incomplete and poverty-stricken thing. As a matter of fact, coins found on their floors are of about 110 to 125 B.C., while those found under the floors are earlier.

Along the southern edge of this strip ran a great wall 7.61 metres high and 2.1 metres thick, which acted as a retaining wall for the great platform on which the temple stood. The details found indicated a rectangular enclosing wall about 310 metres in circumference, a size which agrees very well with Josephus's statement that Herod built an enclosing wall one and one-half stadia in circumference (*Wars* ii. 21 2).

On August 11 work was begun on the lower terrace. The great points revealed here were the Israelite city (or fortress) wall along the edge of the cliff, the paved open space, the southern face of the Israelite palace, the terracing for Greek and Roman houses, and the great enclosing wall of the temple area. Strips

3 and 4, both west of Strip 2, were begun on September 20 and October 18 respectively. In the first of these were again Israelite walls, the continuation of the great Babylonian wall, a Seleucid street with earlier Greek houses underneath, and, high up in the surface *débris*, remnants of Roman foundations. The eastern part of Strip 4, which is to the north of Strip 3, was occupied by a big Seleucid house. Over the western part there were no walls in the higher levels, and we cleared straight down to the Israelite walls, the rock, or the yellow *débris*.

The clue to the whole situation at the summit lay in Strip 2, which ran south from the temple-portico found last year to the edge of the summit plateau. It was the exact width of the temple, and gave us first of all the plan of the Herodian temple, consisting of a stairway, a portico, a vestibule, and a cella with a corridor on each side. The temple showed a very definite later reconstruction, and had manifestly been partly destroyed for its stone before this restoration. The restored building approximated the plan of Herod's building, but the wall between vestibule and cella was about 2.50 metres further south and the vestibule itself showed a continuation of the two inner cella walls with thickened ends as if to support pilasters. The older wall showed the characteristic masonry which appears in all Herod's foundation walls, both on the summit and at the basilica, and which differs entirely from that of the reconstructed parts of the temple.

The pavement, as it was found, was certainly post-herodian. The stairway was manifestly built against the portico and was in good condition. The offering stones about the altar all appear to belong to the Severus period and show the floor level of that time, but the floor of the altar is lower, and is in fact 70 cm. below the lowest step of the great stair. It is therefore probable that the altar itself is Herodian, and the stairway of the reconstruction period, but a final decision must await a cut through the stairway.

The reconstruction of the temple was almost certainly made in the time of the Roman legionary colony settled in Sebaste by Septimius Severus about 200 A.D. When the district became Christian, this Roman temple was, no doubt, a place of abhorrence. It is certain that the great Christian buildings were all

at the east of the forum, and that the stone used in them came from older buildings. It is equally clear that the reconstructed temple has been destroyed down to its foundation-walls and lower by the removal of stone. Apparently the summit was never used as a site for large buildings in early Christian times.

On June 1 half the force was put at work on the "lower temple." Here three strata of earth were distinctly visible, all sloping to the east. These were removed, and the plan of the building thus laid bare was seen to be neither a temple nor a church, but a true basilica, consisting of a large open, stone-paved court surrounded by a colonnade with a mosaic floor. On the north was an apse-like amphitheatre. This basilica adjoined the forum, and was connected with it by a wide doorway through the eastern side of the court. Of the forum itself only the adjoining northwestern corner was laid bare. It also was surrounded by a colonnade, but with smaller columns. The basilica is clearly part of the city of Sebaste built by Herod, having the same masonry and architectural details as the forum and the road of columns. The inscription in Greek on the architrave found in the court-yard mentions the name of *Annius Rufus*], and proves that the building was in existence in his day (ca. 12-15 A.D.). It has been repaired or partially reconstructed at least twice. The latest reconstruction was after 350 A.D. and an earlier and better one was previous to 270 A.D., as is shown by the dates of coins found between the two floors.

The plans of the walls underneath the Herodian basilica could not be fully made out. Their importance therefore lay in the evidence they gave of the existence of different buildings and different periods of construction. One large building of massive construction showed three periods, all apparently Greek. There were also at three points remains of walls on the rock, which appeared to be Israelite. Thus we have at the basilica the same periods as at the summit, with the exception of the Babylonian.

On June 9 two gangs were put at work at the gateway, clearing between the two round towers and about the northern one. The excavations at this point are incomplete, but the present results are important and, as far as they go, conclusive. The Herodian gate is an ornamental, well-built structure just inside the two

towers. The connection with the Herodian structure is established by the masonry, architectural details, and orientation. The axis of the two round towers and the underlying square towers shows that up to Herod's time the roadway from the gate went up the hill. Herod's road of columns follows a gentle ascent around the southern slope of the hill, and the gate under discussion leads straight into this road. Its axis therefore makes an angle of about  $35^\circ$  with that of the older gateway. A roadway paved with rough stones leads steeply up to the floor of the Herodian gate.

The two round towers with the outlying western round tower and the connecting walls belong to a city wall which can be traced around the whole site, giving a length of nearly 4000 metres. According to Josephus, Herod built the great wall of Samaria twenty stadia (or about 4000 metres) in circumference. It would thus appear that the present round towers with connecting walls were built by Herod, probably as the first and most necessary part of his work at Samaria, and the ornamental gate with the road of columns was added later.

As to the restoration of the city by Gabinius referred to by Josephus, it is hardly probable that this was of great importance, since Herod is said to have repeopled the city (Joseph. *Wars* ii. 21 2), but there are traces here of a weak system of fortification, such as might be expected as a result of Gabinius's orders.

A Greek gateway of square towers and adjoining circular structure behind, one of the known Greek forms, lies under the Herodian gate. It probably belongs to the city destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 109 B.C., and goes back to the early days of the Syro-macedonian colony. The city wall belonging to it is not yet identified.

A huge wall, built partly on rock and partly on Israelite masonry, identical in size and structure with the so-called Babylonian wall at the summit, plunges under the Roman masonry just north of the northern tower. No tower is visible corresponding to this Babylonian wall.

The square Greek tower is built in a square cut in the rock, but it does not fill this cut. At the northern corner of the cut, under the Babylonian and other walls, six huge blocks of stone

are visible, a fragment of a wall of Israelite masonry which completely filled this cut. In other words, the square cut in the rock represents the place occupied by the northern Israelite gateway tower, and, in fact, the place of the northern tower of Omri's gateway. The masonry still in place is of the rough, massive Omri style.

Thus at the gateway we have practically the same periods of construction as on the summit and at the basilica.

### III. HISTORICAL REVIEW

1. *The Herodian City.* The city built by Herod was surrounded by a great wall four kilometres in circumference, at least ten metres in height, and strengthened by round towers at frequent intervals. The wall was 3.25 metres thick, and like the towers was built of heavy bossed stones. The chief gate lay on the site of the earlier gates, on the brow of the steepest part of the western end of the hill, at the top of a winding roadway which is still in use. Inside the strong round towers which defended this entrance, Herod built an ornamental gateway oriented to lead into a magnificent road of columns which led around the southern slope of the hill to the eastern end of the forum. This road consisted of a broad chariot road with a roofed colonnade on each side. The northern wall was broken by a series of deep niches, each the width of the space between two columns, possibly used as shops.

The forum was a large open space about  $100 \times 60$  metres in size, also surrounded by a roofed colonnade. On the west a broad doorway led into a basilica (court of law). Below the forum on the north but inside the city wall the remains of a hippodrome are visible.

On the top of the hill Herod built the great temple to Augustus. This consisted of a stairway, a portico with immense columns, a vestibule and a cella with an inner row of smaller columns. It was surrounded by a great enclosing wall which also served as a terrace wall for the temple-area. Outside the enclosure on several lower terraces are traces of Roman houses oriented parallel to the temple. There are certainly other great public build-

ings in the city of Sebaste, especially in the northwest, between the Herodian wall and the earlier wall.

The date of these buildings is fully established by the great marble statue, by Herodian and Roman coins, the inscription of Annius Rufus, and three Roman stelae, not to mention pottery, lamps, and other small objects.

2. *The Seleucid City.* The Greek city destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 109 B.C., so far as recovered, consists of the gateway, on the old site, the temple under the basilica, and the complex of houses at the summit, which are all private houses, on three streets. The only great public building is that represented by the massive walls under the basilica, which appear to be part of a temple. The bronze statuette of Hercules found in a cistern may be from this temple. On the lower terrace are houses built to suit the abrupt slope, with stairways leading from one level of rooms to another. The dates of the houses rest, aside from their position, on a Greek stela of King Demetrius, an abundance of Seleucid and Ptolemaic coins, household altars, pottery, etc.

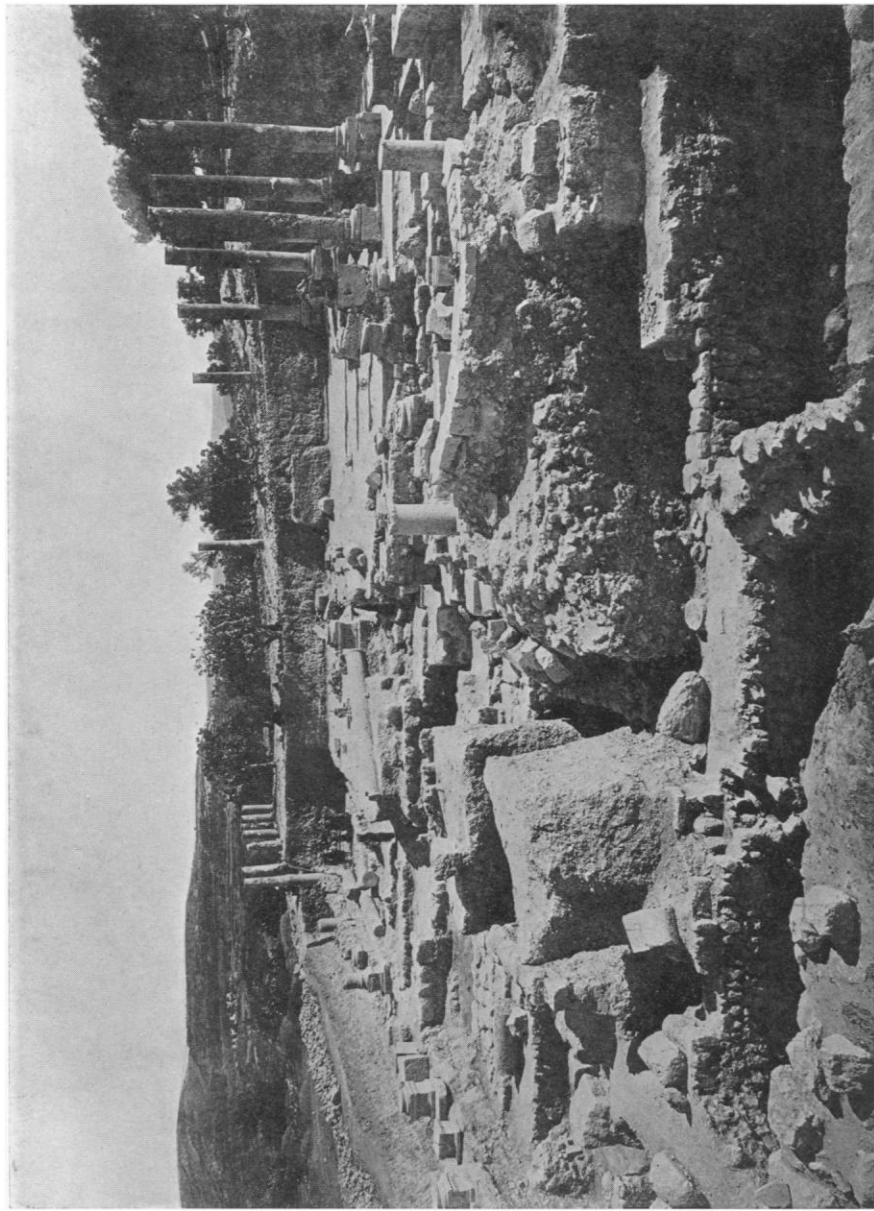
3. *The Babylonian City.* The remains of the Babylonian settlement are the most fragmentary of all. The only structure of importance certainly pre-greek and post-israelite is the great wall which runs east and west across the southern slope of the upper summit and appears again running north and south at the gateway. It is a filled wall, both faces of which are built in receding courses of small stones about 50 cm. high. The filling contains a heavy layer of mud plaster level with the top of each facing course. These are the methods of brick masons unfamiliar with the possibilities of stone as a building material. The date of this wall is certainly between 722 B.C., when Sargon destroyed the Israelite city, and 306 B.C., when the struggles between Alexander's generals in Palestine had ended. The masonry seems to point to people fresh from Babylonia. I am inclined to ascribe these walls directly to the colonists settled in Samaria by Sargon and Esarhaddon, and to date them between 720 and 670 B.C.

4. *The Israelite City.* Of the Israelite city we have at present the palace on the summit, the city wall on the edge of the lower terrace, and the western gateway. As indicated by these remains, it lay on the summit and on the more gentle northern slope of



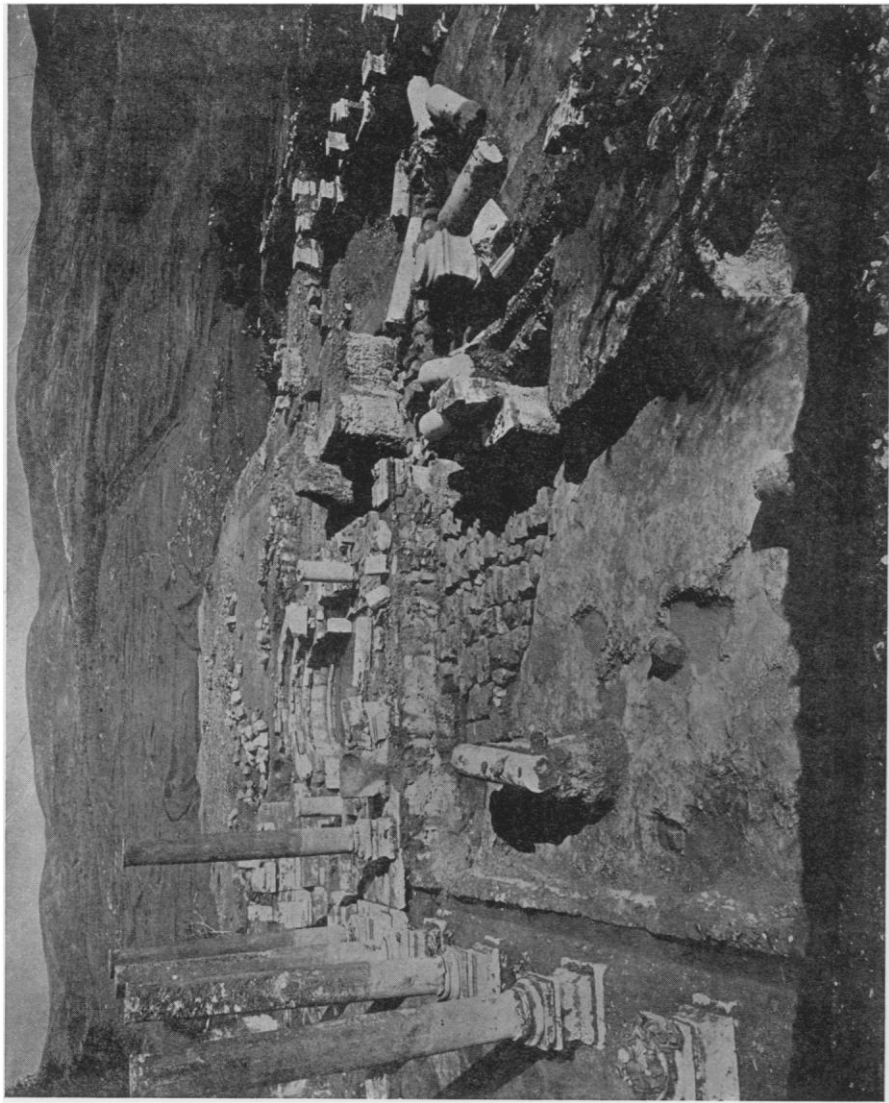
the higher part of the hill. The southern wall appears to run along the top of the steep southern slope down the ridge to the gateway. As might be expected, the palace-castle on the summit is the dominant feature of the city. With the high, sheer castle-walls rising behind the huge city-wall, the hill was impregnable to assault by ancient arms. This unapproachable nest it was from which the Israelites conquered Moab, fought Damascus, and even for a time defied Assyria. Siege after siege by the Damascenes and the Assyrians reduced the garrison to starvation and thus finally to submission, but otherwise no hostile force could break the defence.

Plate 1.



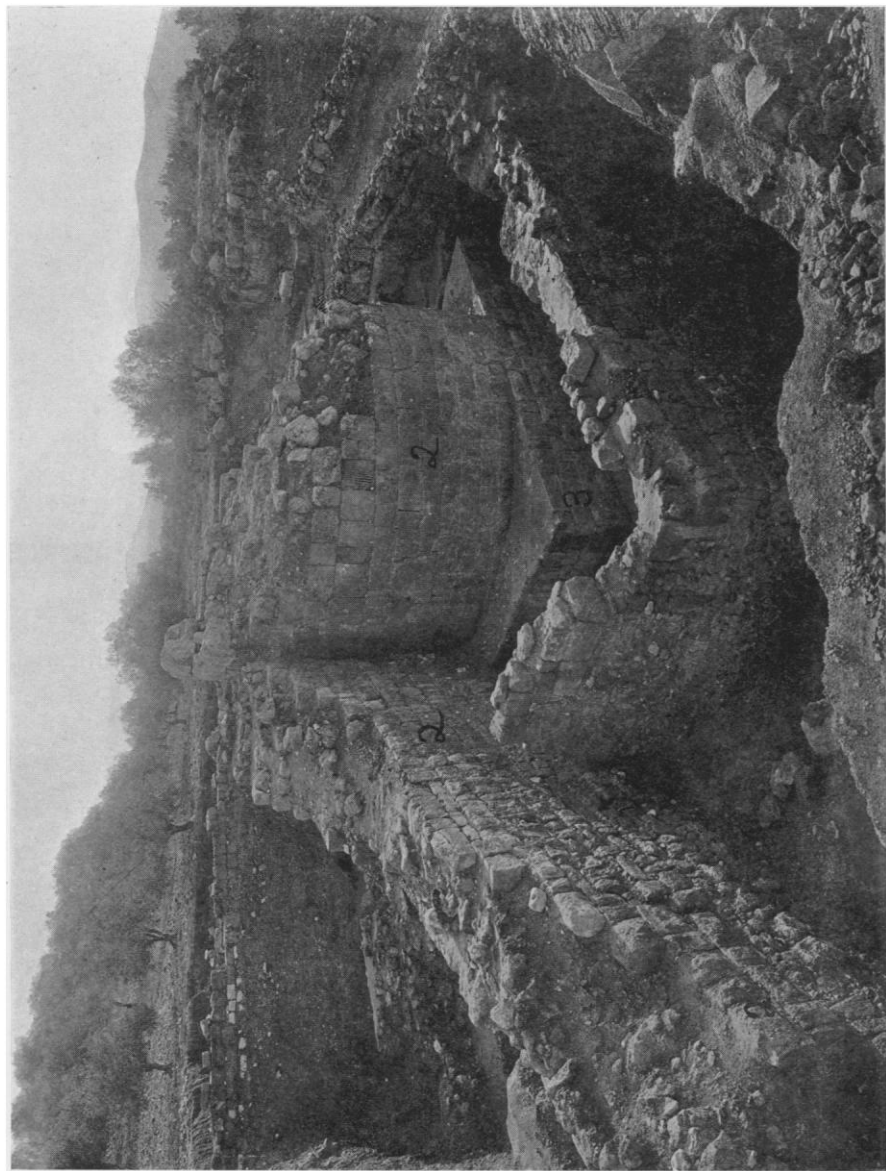
Basilica and western edge of the Forum, looking south.

Plate 2.



Basilica and western edge of the Forum, looking north, showing massive older walls (Greek) under floor of central court.

Plate 3.



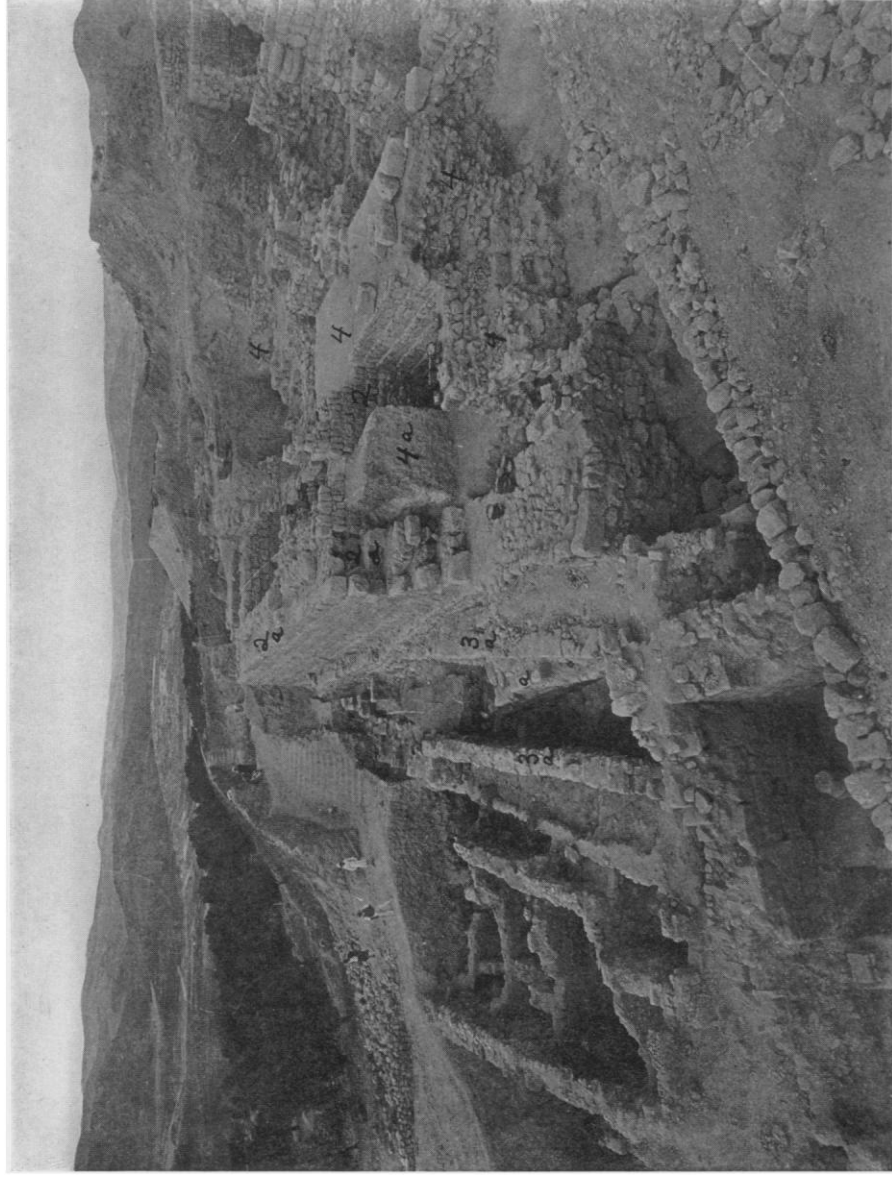
Gateway excavation, looking southeast. 2 = Herodian city wall and tower. 3 = Greek.

Plate 4.

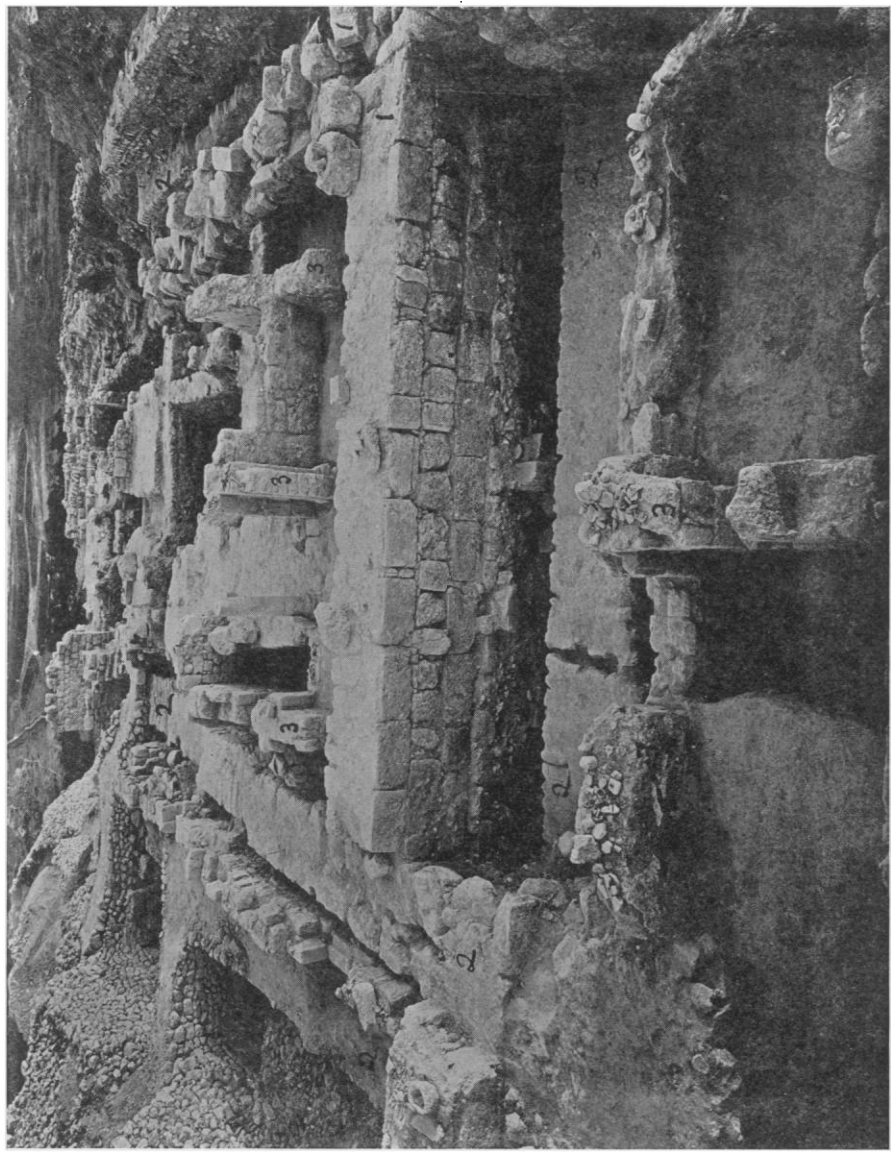


Gateway excavation, looking southeast.

Plate 5.



Looking west on south of summit. 2 = Herodian; 2a = Herodian wall enclosing temple; 3a = Greek walls enclosing Seleucid street; 4 = Babylonian wall; 4a = block of yellow debris left intact among the later walls.



Looking south over Temple and Seleucid houses. 1 = reconstruction of Septimius Severus; 2 = Herodian Temple; 3 = Seleucid house-walls.



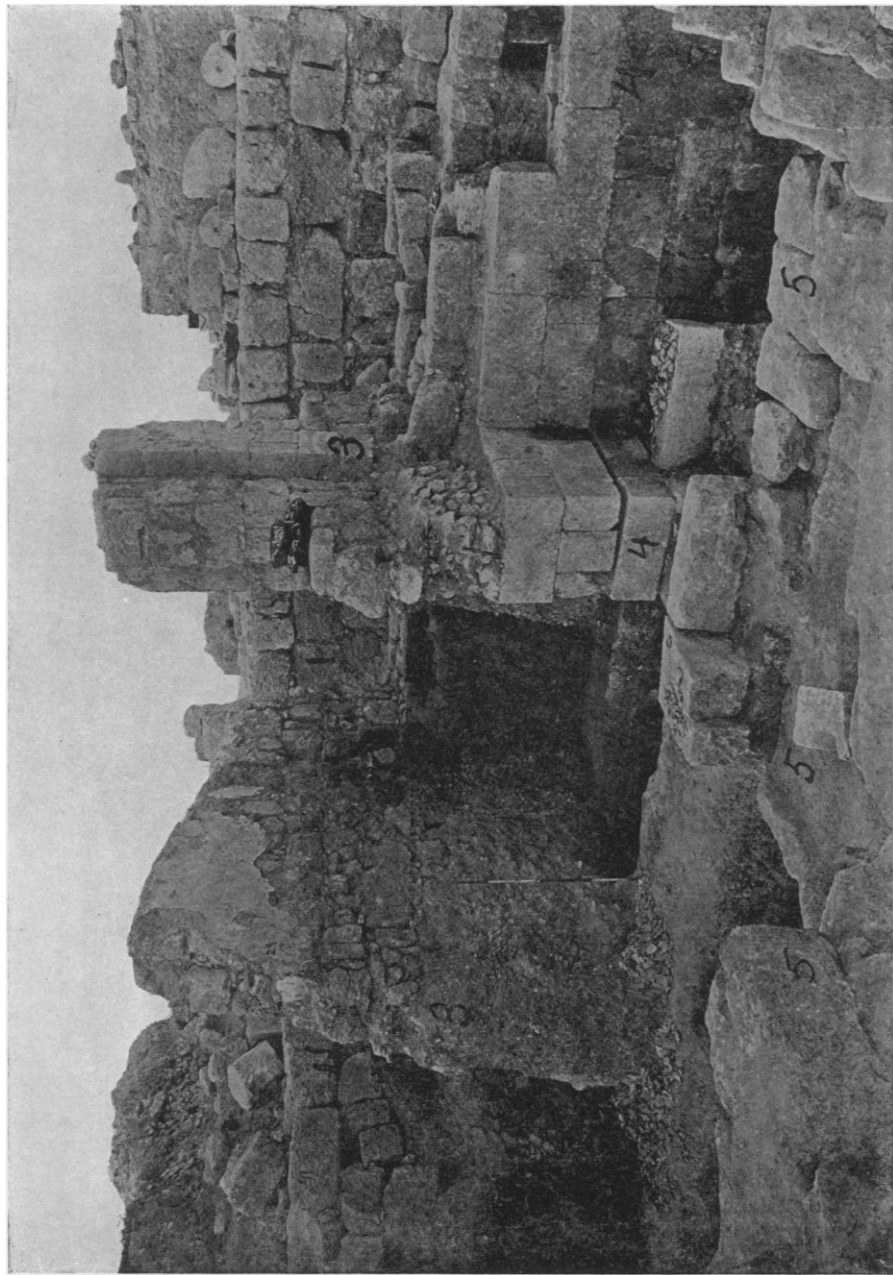
Plate 7.



Israelite rooms at summit, looking southwest. 1 = Septimius Severus; 2 = Herodian; 3 = Greek; 4 = Ahab; 5 = Omri.



Plate 8.



Israelite walls with superimposed Seleucid walls. 3 = Seleucid; 4 = Ahab; 5 = Omri.